

Polk County Observer

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PRICE OF GASOLINE.

The federal department of justice, it is reported, is planning a little investigation in a direction that will be pleasing to about a million automobile owners scattered throughout this country. The object of this inquiry will be to discover the reason for the recent drastic advance in the price of gasoline, and particularly to discover if there has been any violation of the Sherman anti-trust law. The users of gasoline have already "discovered" the higher prices, which practically amount to double the prices they were paying during the recent months of summer. But they, like the government officials, are at a loss to account for this change, and they will be very glad to know if there is any "good and sufficient reason therefor."

A widespread impression prevails—perhaps started and encouraged by the big manufacturers of gasoline—that the increased price for the latter is in some way connected with the European war situation; that the European countries are taking a larger portion of the American supply of gasoline, with the natural result of higher prices for home consumers. This may be so, although as home consumption of this commodity must materially diminish with the advent of cold weather, we could spare a considerable larger quantity for foreigners without affecting the price in the manner that has been experienced. There is also a recollection of previous years when the gasoline price has gone up with cold weather, despite diminished home consumption and no chance to lay it on war conditions. And a good many persons probably have figured it out that when the big oil magnates "need the money" they simply push up the prices, and are able to do this in spite of the so-called law of supply and demand.

To arbitrarily mulct the winter users of gasoline, however, is not exactly the fair thing to do, and it is no wonder that autoists who continue to use their cars in cold weather object to paying two prices for their gasoline, simply to keep up the level of profits to correspond with the summer months, when the consumption of this commodity is much larger. To them, therefore, it is welcome news to learn that the federal authorities are suspicious of anti-trust law violations in this connection, and that an investigation is planned to discover the truth. If this suspicion is verified, moreover, gasoline users will hope to see the oil magnates brought up with a round turn and severely punished for their greedy manipulation of prices. For in the eyes of a gasoline user there is no more reprehensible crime in the list than to "soak" the poor consumer, who generally has plenty of other troubles without being forced to pay two prices for his gasoline.

DIFFICULT PROBLEM.

Immigration statistics, furnished in the annual report of secretary of the department of labor, serve to again call attention to one of the difficult problems which this country must face and solve in anticipation of the ending of the European war. Thoughtful students of the immigration problem as a whole long have held that anything which would check the influx of hundreds of thousands of foreigners annually would be a welcome change of conditions. Secretary Wilson shows that during the past fiscal year only about one-third as many aliens came to the United States as during the previous year, the figures being approximately 435,000 for 1915 as against 1,400,000 for 1914. This, of course, was mainly due to the war. It is significant, however, to note that the departures of foreigners, even including the thousands of reservists sailing to join the colors of their respective countries, show a marked decrease. It must be remembered that the reports of cabinet officers cover only the fiscal year ending June 30. For the year ending June 30, 1914, which closed before the European war began, 634,000 aliens emigrated as against 384,000 for the year ending June 30, 1915. For the twelve months of the calendar year, however, 294,000 sailed during 1915 as against 303,000 during the preceding year, and, as noted, the 1915 figures include the reservists.

The inherent peril of the situation lies, not in the gratifying decrease in the number of aliens arriving, but in the certainty that the end of the war will, in all probability, cause the flood

of immigration, stemmed by the war itself, to rush upon this country with redoubled volume and force. It is reasonable to suppose that the United States will appear in a more inviting light than ever when the last remaining tie of patriotic necessity is broken by the coming of peace and when Europe will be the least desirable of all places on the globe in which to live. That immigration will very materially increase is a foregone conclusion and the problem which ought to be taken up without loss of time is a revision of the immigration laws for the protection of all concerned.

This is one of the most vital features of comprehensive preparedness, second only in importance, aside from that of defensive protection, to industrial preparedness which will shut out the vast floods of cheap foreign-made goods certain to be dumped into this country, if immediate steps are not taken to protect American industry. Even the tremendous assimilative powers of this country would be tested to the utmost if they had to meet a flood of foreign goods and a horde of aliens, coming into competition with American manufactures and producers on the one hand and American workmen on the other.

While America is the land of opportunity for foreigners, it ought also to be the land of opportunity for its own citizens. And while no arbitrary and unjust obstacles should be placed in the way of the entry of desirable immigrants, it has long been understood with a growing degree of quietude that the immigration laws have practically thrown down the bars and admitted desirable and undesirable alike. How best to make the laws equitable without weakening their primary intent, which is to elevate the standard of American citizenship and conserve the interests of the nation, is a problem to which many persons are now giving profound consideration.

BELGIUM'S APPRECIATION.

The deep and sincere appreciation of the Belgian people for the success and relief afforded to them by this nation has been nicely expressed in the address of Cardinal Mercier, primate of Belgium, to the American committee of relief. Gratitude and appreciation for food and clothing, however, will not in the opinion of the cardinal, measure the final influence of this nation's charitable action. The wise and delicate way in which this charity has been handled, he says, has served to also teach a valuable lesson in self-help, and he looks on the example of American initiative and patriotism to help his struggling people in their revival of nationality after the war, as the highest gift of America to Belgium.

The war of ideals that underlies the strife of arms appeals with peculiar force to the head of the Belgian church. Cardinal Mercier believes that his people will be upheld in their time of reconstruction "by keeping their eyes on your great land of founding initiatives; your land of ambition for more comfort, not through covetousness of other peoples' wealth, but through tenacious will to individual endeavor, with a patriotism that ignores civil discord and draws its strength from a collective love for national progress."

Here is a penetrating vision of a greater service to the world than sundering ravaged peoples. The American nation is not formidable in war, and its collective industry lacks German organization and efficiency. But it has lived through a century of mingled adversity and prosperity under ideals that make for national progress and individual freedom. These stand for the best example to nations summoned to rebuild, as we had to rebuild fifty years ago.

HORSE-MEAT FOR FOOD.

Horse-meat has long been used for food in many parts of the world, and even in this country more or less of it has probably found its way to market, although usually disguised by some other name. It would appear, in fact, that the trade in horse-meat has reached considerable proportions at the great metropolis of New York, for the board of health of that city has just decided to formally legalize the slaughter of horses for food purposes. The only difference this will make, we are told, is that hereafter there will be closer official supervision over the slaughter of such animals, and the places where the products are sold and served.

No real objections can be urged against the use of horse-meat for food, and perhaps a genuinely useful purpose may be served in thus economizing on a product which otherwise would largely go to waste. Of course there is a sentimental aspect connected with the question, leading to a prejudice against horse-meat, which will deter many from adopting this custom. The excessively high prices for nearly all other kinds of meats, however, may lead not a few to experiment with the cheaper substitute, cheapness being the chief attraction of food of this character. The American people generally, however, will continue to show preference for other kinds of meats, at the same time hoping that sometime in the future

there may be a readjustment between supply and demand, which will allow the prices of regular meats to get back somewhere nearer to former levels.

"SWEET '16."

The newborn year is being referred to as "sweet '16," adapted, of course, from the term commonly applied to young girls when they reach the age of budding womanhood. Unusual preparations were made in Dallas to greet the New Year with the same welcome and friendly recognition that are customarily shown toward the feminine type of "sweet '16," and the festivities and celebrations were referred to as "receptions" in honor of the coming guest.

It would seem that this is a very pretty fancy, and not without appropriate significance. The New Year is always widely welcomed on its arrival, but there are reasons why the world in general looks forward to 1916 with especial hope and pleasurable anticipations. Its predecessor was a year of exceptional troubles, worries, losses, sorrows and disappointments, and all over the world there is an abiding hope for better things to come in the present year. It is confidently expected, in fact, that this year will bring an end to the terrible war which is devastating the nations of Europe, and the re-establishment of peace and friendly relations. It also is expected that ending of the war will be followed by a marked revival of commerce and industry, and by fresh advances in the realm of science, art, education and religion. In fact, there is a widespread hope, which virtually amounts to an anticipation, that wonderful changes are in store for the people of this world, and that the year will not pass before many of these changes become actually operative.

There is, therefore, an appropriate connection in the reference to 1916 as "sweet '16," thus according to the New Year the charm and attractiveness possessed by the typical young woman who has passed the age of childhood and is about to turn the corner of maturity, with full promise of service and with joyful eagerness to fulfill her mission in life. In the same manner it is hoped the year '16 will also prove a "sweet '16," and will not disappoint the many fond expectations which are connected with its advent.

MORE TROUBLE.

Just when we had arrived at the conclusion that we had practically overcome all the difficulties to which the automobilist is heir to, a hitherto unknown problem hobs into the arena. It is known as "petromortis," or automobile gas poisoning. One man is dead from the disease. The thing is new to science, and as yet has not made its appearance in Dallas. Persons who are subject to vertigo may be attacked when in a close, smelly garage. The danger lies in a failure of certain elements in the gasoline to oxidize. In any event there is a quick suffusion of a violent gas that renders the victim faint. Thus, if the exhaust of an automobile continues, the result is almost instant death.

The Observer isn't as handsome today as formerly, and all because of the struggle for supremacy across the big pond. It is now practically impossible to buy a white sheet of paper of the quality on which newspapers are printed, and hence the dingy appearance of this publication. We don't like it, but there's no alternative. The manufacturers are unable to secure the proper chemicals, and there you are.

The announcements of epidemics of colds and other forms of illness that are finding their way through the news columns these days serve as a reminder that one of the best ways to promote ailments of this sort is by keeping the windows closed tight. Colds particularly have no better friend than bad air; they have no more relentless foe than fresh air.

The federal income tax records show there are nearly a thousand persons in this country who may be classed as millionaires, although the chances are the list is still larger, as many probably preferred to lie about it rather than pay the tax to put them in this classification.

Apparently Justice Hughes does not appreciate the fact that a lot of people in this country are relying on him to save them from Col. Roosevelt.

In one respect, at least, the Ford peace plan has scored a triumphant success. He wanted to spend some money for the cause of peace, and he has had his way about it.

What hurts Mr. Ford most of all, perhaps, is the fact that he never even got a chance to show his samples after he reached Europe.

NOTICE!

The Dallas drug store will observe the following hours, beginning January 1: Sundays, 9:30 to 12 noon. Weekdays, 7:30 a. m. to 8:00 p. m. FULLER PHARMACY CONRAD STAFRIN C. H. MANOCK



THE PERRYDALE SCHOOL HOUSE

Under the guidance of Prof. R. G. Dykstra, the Perrydale schools have one of the largest and most energetic Industrial clubs in Polk county, and its efforts will be made a very conspicuous part of the county show next fall, when its display will probably be one of the largest and most perfect among the big array that is sure to be seen there. Students are enrolled in all of the fourteen projects. The Dairy Herd Record club has a special organization of its own and the boys make frequent trips to the neighboring dairy ranches and score the barns as well as the cattle. This work is done under the supervision of the Oregon Agricultural college extension department. In addition to a lively industrial club the district has the following organizations: Parents' and Teachers' association, brass band of 30 pieces, orchestra, dramatic club and athletic association.

EFFICIENCY AIM OF SCOUTS.

Dallas Boy Scouts Interested in Brockway's Remarks.

"Like many other things showing performance and power, the scout movement can be traced back to widely separated sources where constructive ideas came to boy workers and were tested with varying degrees of success," says J. E. Brockway. In America there have been a number of organizations, methods, plans and principles that have proven effective.

"There is a call for the scout movement because the boys in our modern life, and especially in our cities and villages, do not have the chance, as did the boys of the past, most of whom grew up in the country, to become strong, self-reliant, resourceful and helpful, and to get acquainted with nature and outdoor life, without special guidance and training. Therefore, this movement brings the boys together in patrols and troops, and seeks to cultivate in them courage, loyalty, patriotism, fellowship, self-control, courtesy, kindness to animals, usefulness, cheerfulness, cleanliness, thrift, purity and honor. It believes that, with such training, American boys will, as men, be leaders in progress, peace and all things right and good.

"The scout movement is not military in thought, form or spirit, although it does instill in boys such virtues as honor, loyalty, obedience and patriotism. The uniform, the patrol, the troop and the drill are not for military tactics; they are for the unity, the harmony and the rhythm of spirit that boys learn in scouting. It is in the wearing of the uniform and the doing of things together, as scouts, that they absorb the force and truth of the scout law, which states: 'A scout is a friend of all, and a brother to every other scout.'

Sleigh Owners Have Harvest.

Those few fortunate who were possessors of sleighs and cutters on Sunday and Monday evening reaped a bountiful harvest from the rent of the vehicles. But the exorbitant rates are probably justified in view of the fact that enough snow for sleighing falls only once in a number of years. Livery stables ordinarily do not have cutters, but some of them managed to borrow from friendly farmers on Sunday, and those who owned them got them down from the rafters in the shed and dusted them off for the semi-occasional harvest. Anxious easterners, and the few Oregonians who know the delights of sleigh-riding waited their turn at the vehicles and paid just what was asked by the owners.

Alas, Too True.

One plain reason why taxes in Oregon are so high is because those things that are done, and must be done, benefit a comparative few and the same could be of benefit to many without additional cost. The few have to pay what would be apportioned among the many if the many were here. The only way to escape high taxes is to induce others to add to the taxable properties. The more growth and development the lower the taxes. No theory will actually reduce the amount of money necessary for municipal, county and state governments. More population and more improvements and more settlement of lands will lower the taxes to each one. In eastern cities, counties and states the expense of conducting the government is greater, but there are more to share and make lighter the burdens. We have city, county and state governments in a 96,030-square mile state having only 672,819 population in 1910, and now estimated to be 890,000, and a goodly portion of it tied up in reserves that do not assist in the payment of taxes. It is the history of every sparsely settled state that high taxes confront the property-holders.—Woodburn Independent.

The school building was last summer enlarged to afford additional accommodations to the increased number of pupils, and the Perrydale district now has one of the best equipped buildings in the rural realms of the county, as shown by the accompanying picture, for which The Observer is indebted to Mr. Dykstra. Two thousand dollars were expended in making the betterment, and already the community which is responsible for the improvement realizes that it made a wise move when it authorized the betterment.

Prof. Dykstra is greatly interested in educational work, and loses no opportunity to improve conditions. He is also active in what may be termed "side-lines" to the regular course, and under his careful direction the Perrydale schools are rapidly coming to the front.

ROSE SLIPS FOR SCHOOLS.

Polk Schools Have Opportunity to Beautify Grounds.

Four thousand Frau Karl Drusehki rose slips, rooted and growing, are to be given away this college year to the four-year high schools of the state by the University of Oregon. The plants are to be set out on the high school grounds and cared for. Any time after the first of January, the desired number of slips—from 12 to 20—will be shipped prepaid on the request of the high school principal, the chairman of the board, or the president of the student body. The requests will be filed and filled in order of receipt, but some of the eastern Oregon shipments will be held up until after the hard freezes.

H. M. Fisher, superintendent of the university grounds, says that the roses are a uniformly hard and vigorous variety. The two hundred foot hedge from which the slips are cut, is even now full of white buds. Most of the 1600 cuttings sent out last year grew, Mr. Fisher says. It was the first time the offer had been made, and there were more requests than could be filled. Even the grade schools began asking for them. Mr. Fisher says that by close trimming the parent hedge could furnish as many as 10,000 slips, so prolific is it.

The only receipt asked by the extension division of the university, through which application for the cuttings should be made, is acknowledgment through the local paper.

Mr. Ford Not An Applicant.

"I have not been, am not and will not be an applicant for the office of county school superintendent when Mr. Seymour resigns," says Prof. W. I. Ford, city superintendent of schools. Mr. Ford's name has been mentioned among possible successors to Mr. Seymour, but he is not seeking the position.

Prof. B. A. Teats, superintendent of the Independence schools, was in Dallas for several days last week. Miss Ava Coad was the guest of Salem friends on New Years.

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